

North Chicago VA News



VA Great Lakes
Health Care System
VISN 12

North Chicago
VA Medical Center
3001 Green Bay Road
North Chicago, Illinois 60064

November 2005

VISN 12 WELCOMES NEW NETWORK DIRECTOR



Effective October 2, 2005, James W. Roseborough has been appointed Network Director for VISN 12.

Previously Roseborough served as Director of the VA Ann Arbor Healthcare system (VAAHS), with the challenge of combining the main Ann Arbor Tertiary Care Referral Center with the new Community-Based Outpatient Clinics (CBOCs) in Jackson and Flint, Michigan and the existing CBOC in Toledo, Ohio. With the integration completed, he set about improving access and services by adding additional outpatient clinics resulting in a dramatic improvement in customer service scores. The VAAHS is comprised of one hospital, one

extended care center, and three CBOCs.

Roseborough is a native of Pittsburgh and received his Bachelor of Arts degree from Penn State University, and his Certificate of Public Administration from Eastern Washington State College. He joined the VA in 1970 and prior to being appointed as the VAAHS Director, was Medical Center Director of the VA Medical Center in Poplar Bluff, Missouri. Mr. Roseborough was the Associate Director at North Chicago VAMC from 1993 to 1996.

He is a diplomate of the American College of Healthcare Executives and is a member of several other professional organizations.

POW/MIA PROGRAM HELD AT NCVAMC

The North Chicago VA Medical Center held its annual POW/MIA Program on September 13th featuring four former Prisoners of War (POW's) from World War II. Each of them served in the Air Force, sharing their experiences and stories of heroism and sacrifice. The four speakers

included Frank Schwermin, John Lord, Nathan Firestone, and Ernest Shavitz. The audience, which included many former POW's from Northern Illinois, was very moved by these stories. It is very important to pass down these moments in history to the younger generations, so that they may have a better understanding of what actually happened and remember

what these men and women sacrificed for our country. But this observance is more for those who never came back and to ensure that they are "Never Forgotten".

Pictured left to right is:

Former POW's Frank Schwermin, John Lord, Nathan Firestone, and Ernest Shavitz, along with Marianne Semrad, Associate Director at North Chicago VAMC

North Chicago News
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RELIEF EFFORTS FOR HURRICANE VICTIMS

To enhance donations for the VA Employee Disaster Relief Fund - Hurricane Katrina, a drawing was held on Sept. 9 and 12 at North Chicago VAMC. Donations amounted to \$1,850. Thanks to all who contributed to this worthy cause. Congratulations to the staff who each won a TV that was provided through the Canteen Fund: Willis Smith, Facility Mgt. Service Paul Hines, Facility Mgt. Service

North Chicago also had a bake sale on Sept. 16 and raised \$500 to support VA staff affected by the hurricane and Nutrition and Food Service staff sold red, white and blue ribbons that collected \$275.

North Chicago has deployed the following staff to assist the victims: Judy Vega, RN, Jenny Kulk, RN, Mary Jane Muir, RN, Roger Vines, Lonnie Jeffrey, Barbara Robinson, NA, Norma Cox, RN, John Bair, Ph.D., Larry Regulus, William Poirier, and Christopher Bryant. Three staff volunteered to help with the call center that FEMA is

coordinating in Chicago, which included: Pamela Devore, RN; Virginia Edingburg, Vocational Rehab Specialist; and Naomi Lewis, Domiciliary Assistant.

North Chicago staff also has been busy assisting fellow employees who had family members affected by hurricane Katrina. At least for now these families have temporarily relocated into the North Chicago area. Clothing, personal items and monetary donations have been made to help these families get back on



their feet. North Chicago has also helped two displaced VA employees from the Gulf Coast with temporary jobs at the medical center.

NEW CT SCANNER



Pictured left to right is: Mike Hrabak, Honorato Deguia, Winston Casis, M.D., Piyush Vyas, M.D., Yan-fu Feng, M.D.

Imaging Service has a new GE Lightspeed 16 slice CT Scanner. As the name Lightspeed indicates, the scanner provides tremendous scanning speed with excellent image quality. The scanner comes with software that allows reconstruction of raw data at different image thicknesses without having to re-scan the patient. Images can be viewed in 2D and 3D. Advanced

software allows for applications in Cardiac CT, CT Colonography, 3D CT Angiography and CT Advanced Lung Analysis. We are excited to have this new state-of-the-art equipment which will assist in providing our veterans with the best medical care.

NATIONAL DISABILITY AWARENESS MONTH

The 2005 national theme is: "Workers with disabilities: Ready for Tomorrow's Jobs Today". This year's theme emphasizes that people with disabilities are a vital part of America's workforce – they are important to our country's future economic success. The North Chicago VAMC employs 156 individuals who have identified themselves with a disability; this is 12.5% of the workforce. Of the 156 employees, 65 are disabled veterans, which is 5% of all our employees. Public Law 176, enacted by Congress in 1945, designated the first week in October as "National Employ the Physically Handicapped Week." Congress changed the name to "National Disability Employment Awareness Month" in 1988.

HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH AT NCVA



North Chicago VA kicked off Hispanic Heritage Month 2005 on



Pictured above: Ballet Folklorico Mi Lindo Mexico.

Pictured right: Miguel Camacho from Facility Management Service and kids from the Paul K. Kennedy Child Care Center are celebrating the kickoff of Hispanic Heritage Month

Pictured at far right: Alderman Tony Figueroa.

Thursday, September 15 with a Pinata Breaking at the Paul K. Kennedy Child Care Center. It was a busy month for the Hispanic Heritage Committee. Besides participating in Waukegan's Mexican Independence Day Parade on Sunday, September 18, they held a Havana Nights event featuring dance demonstrations, an exhibit and snow cones on Thursday, September 22. To close Hispanic Heritage Month, in the Theater on Thursday, October 6, Ballet Folklorico Mi Lindo Mexico performed and Alderman Tony Figueroa of Waukegan was guest speaker. A special thanks is extended to the members of the Hispanic Committee for the time and work devoted to the success of these outstanding programs.



SOLID GOLD - Congratulations, Irv!



Irv Czosek, an Army veteran from Libertyville, IL, was one of more

than 500 veterans in their "golden age" who competed in Norman, Oklahoma at the 19th National Veterans Golden Age Games – the largest sporting event in the world for senior veterans. The games are hosted by the Department of Veterans Affairs and designed to provide a multi-event sports and therapeutic program for veterans ages 55 and over who are receiving treatment from a VA

medical facility. Irv, a 72 year old combat veteran of the Korean War, was diagnosed in the 1980's with Multiple Sclerosis and receives care at the North Chicago VA. He made his 15th appearance at this year's Golden Age Games where he competed against a record setting number of athletes. Meeting the challenge of the competition, Irv brought home two gold medals in shuffleboard and billiard-nine ball, a silver in table tennis and a bronze in bowling.

NC VA SPONSORS JOB FAIR

The North Chicago VA Medical Center held their seventh annual Veterans/DoD Job Fair, on Wednesday, September 14. The Vocational Rehabilitation Unit at North Chicago VAMC co-sponsored this event with the Naval Training Station, Great Lakes, and Transitional Assistance Management Program.

The goal in sponsoring the Job Fair

is to afford employment opportunities to those that are unemployed or under-employed. This event was for veterans, active duty military, military family members, their dependents and retirees.

Approximately 125 veterans and 75 active duty, military family and dependents and retirees met with 20 local employers to discuss possible



job opportunities.



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NATIONAL PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT DAY

Each year on Oct. 6, physician assistants (PAs) celebrate the more than 55,000 members of the profession, who provide essential medical and surgical services to patients in the United States.

PAs are health care professionals licensed to practice medicine with the guidance of a supervising physician. PAs conduct physical exams, diagnose and treat illnesses, order and interpret tests, counsel patients on preventive health care, assist in surgery and in most states, can write prescriptions. At North Chicago VA, PAs care for patients in a variety of settings. While some work in surgery and gastro-intestinal clinic, others work in such places as the Primary Care and Mental Health.

PAs are trained in intensive education

programs accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs and must pass a national certification examination. To maintain their national certification, PAs must log 100 hours of continuing medical education every two years and pass a recertification exam every six years.



North Chicago VA Physician Assistants: first row from Left: Shannon Moulton-Kolodzik, Chris Healy, Jan Wilson, Inna Shusterman. Second row from left: Tim Ross, Steve Steepleton, Jeanne Kim, Owen Timrick. Not pictured: Awilda LaBonne, James Ellis, Etel Zeveleva and Julia Kizhner.

National Conference of VA Catholic Chaplains



Forty-one Catholic Chaplains with their Bishop gathered for the annual conference, held September 12 – 15, 2005 at the Cenacle Retreat and Conference Center in Chicago. Topics included: certification, ethics, women's veterans issues, endorsement, and VA Central Office issues. Pictured with Father Bill Vander Heyden is former NCVA

employee, Jill Feldman, and current NCVA employees, Katherine Dong, and Barbara Wisott, who addressed the chaplains about the changing military and therefore, the necessity of a changing VA to accommodate women veterans.

Season of Pride



The new Chief Selects from the Great Lakes Naval Training Center visited our veterans in SGRC to participate in activities and eat lunch with them. This is the third year for the Navy "Season of Pride", which is part of their traditional initiation as they go from enlisted to Chief. Pictured are the new Navy Chief Selects singing Anchors Aweigh and reciting the Sailors Creed.

PAS Open House



On September 29, PAS held an open house for the new enrollment area located in Bldg. 133, clinical addition. This newly remodeled area allows more privacy for patient interviews. The open house was well attended.

EXTRA! EXTRA!

October 17, 2005

LOCAL LANDMARK AGREEMENT BETWEEN DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE AND DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS



Congressman Mark Kirk, 10th District, Illinois and numerous veterans look on as Gordon H. Mansfield, Deputy Secretary of Veterans Affairs, and Dr. William Winkenwerder, Assistant Secretary of Defense for Health Affairs sign the agreement.

On Monday, October 17, 2005, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and Department of Defense (DoD) signed an agreement fully integrating the North Chicago VA Medical Center (NCVAMC) and Naval Hospital Great Lakes (NHGL) effective in 2010. It was held in Building 4, Bourke Hall where over 250 veterans, VA staff and Navy personnel witnessed an historic event between VA & DoD.

Congressman Mark Kirk, 10th District, Illinois.; Gordon H. Mansfield, Deputy Secretary of Veterans Affairs, and Dr. William Winkenwerder, Assistant Secretary of Defense for Health Affairs participated in the ceremony.

Before the ceremony Congressman Kirk held a press conference along with Deputy Secretary Mansfield and Dr. Winkenwerder to announce this unprecedented agreement between VA & DoD. Several local and Chicago area media attended.

The signing ceremony begins the planning of Phase III of the

partnership between NCVAMC & NHGL. Phase I was the shifting of inpatient mental health services from NHGL to NCVAMC in October 2003. Phase II is presently being worked on which is renovating and expanding NCVAMC's Surgery and Emergency Departments. It is a \$13 million project. Once that is

completed in June 2006 all of NHGL's inpatient services including pediatrics, emergency and surgery services will shift to NCVAMC. This will be a milestone since nowhere else in the country is there such a relationship between VA & Navy. This joint partnership will mean VA & Navy personnel will be working together to provide the best quality care to veterans, and active duty and their family members. Navy and VA providers will be working along side each other and for the first time in a VA, pediatric care will be provided for Navy family members by Navy pediatricians.

Phase III of the joint partnership includes a \$110 Million DoD construction project to include a new federal ambulatory care clinic co-located with NCVAMC and renovating existing space at NCVAMC. This landmark agreement, reached after 4 years of



A press conference was held prior to the signing by Winkenwerder, Kirk and Mansfield.



James Roseborough, VISN 12 Network Director; Captain Michael Anderson, Commanding Officer, Naval Hospital, Great Lakes and Patrick Sullivan, North Chicago VA Medical Center Director provide information during the press conference.

extensive negotiations, will fully integrate leadership, and all clinical and administrative functions. Leadership will be provided by an interagency Board of Directors and Advisory Board, a VA Medical Center Director and a Navy Deputy Director.

Six work groups are currently working on developing this Federal Health Care Facility (FHCF). These six groups are:

- *Human Resources
- *Information Management/Technology
- *Leadership
- *Clinical
- *Finance/Budget
- *Administrative

The working groups will be responsible for evaluating and establishing agreed upon criteria and the development of an implementation plan for the FHCF. The working groups will review and incorporate the lessons learned from current DoD/VA demonstration sites, as well as previously unsuccessful DoD/VA joint venture sites.

Congressman Kirk told the audience, “Imagine, when this is complete, what the reception area will look like. You’ll have veterans sitting next to recruits who just joined the United States Navy. It’s great that they are all cared for in the same way.”

The proposed Governance Model will integrate NCVAMC and NHGL into one Federal Health Care Facility. This integration will provide opportunities for direct sharing, collaboration and coordination of health care resources. The primary goals of this collaboration are to improve access, patient satisfaction, and timely delivery of services for VA and DoD beneficiaries while enhancing and expanding health care services, reducing redundancies, utilizing economies of scale in support processes, and reducing costs. All services currently available at NHGL and NCVAMC will be placed within this organizational structure to provide for efficient delivery of healthcare services within a seamless patient care and support environment. One medical staff will be created which will ensure that one set of by-laws applies to all providers in order to establish a single standard of care for the Federal Health Care Facility. This plan also addresses the unique missions and identities of both organizations and attempts to preserve their primary missions while seeking to achieve the objectives already

mentioned.

Deputy Secretary Mansfield stated, “It makes sense for the VA and DoD to work together. The VA recognizes that when these recruits step forward to serve this country, they are going to become veterans at some point.” The Deputy Secretary added, “Congressman Kirk has worked hard to see this joint effort come to fruition and we are grateful for his continued support for veterans, as well as active duty military and their family members.”

Dr. Winkenwerder who also thanked Congressman Kirk for his persistence stated, “This is a great day in military medicine.”

Developing a Federal Health Care Facility between VA and DoD is a major initiative for both Departments. The overwhelming benefit is the continued provision of accessible, high quality healthcare for active duty and their family members, and veteran patients that benefits taxpayers through the reduction in costs by reducing duplication between these two health care delivery systems. At the same time, this partnership will improve the seamless delivery of care to patients, from entry into the armed services through veteran status. This partnership model that North Chicago VA Medical Center and Naval Hospital Great Lakes are creating will be used for future VA/DoD joint ventures.

The projected full integration is scheduled for 2010.



Bourke Hall was filled to capacity with dignitaries, veterans, and staff to witness the historic agreement.